

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 001303

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SA, SA/INS, IO, IO/T, INL/C/CJ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/06/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#), [SNAR](#), [AORC](#), [IR](#), [CE](#)

SUBJECT: COLOMBO PLAN: ACTION REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT
PROPOSALS

REF: A. STATE 167626 (NOTAL)

[1](#)B. COLOMBO 1268 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador Jeffrey J. Lunstead. Reasons 1.5(b,d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is an Action Request -- please see Para Six.

[1](#)2. (C) NO CONSENSUS IN TEHRAN: At the August 4 Colombo Plan Council meeting, the Ambassador stated that the United States did not consider the amendment on arrears to be in effect since there was no consensus on the issue. (Note: This was the first Council meeting since the 39th Consultative Committee Meeting "CCM" in Tehran in mid-June -- which the U.S. did not attend -- when the proposed constitutional amendment on arrears was "adopted.") Elaborating, the Ambassador said that the USG position of being unable support the proposed amendment had been formally stated before the Council in November 2003. Therefore, there was not consensus on the issue, as required by the Colombo Plan constitution, and the action of member countries in Tehran to adopt the amendment was not valid. (NB, the Constitution is actually somewhat vague, since it says that members "shall endeavor to reach agreement by consensus.")

[1](#)3. (C) AGREEMENT TO CONVENE WORKING GROUP: In response to U.S. comments, the Colombo Plan Secretary General proposed that a working group be convened to develop an amendment that would receive support from all countries. Representatives from both Pakistan and Nepal supported the U.S. contention that consensus had not been reached and agreed with the Secretary General's proposal for a working group.

SIPDIS

[1](#)4. (C) The Ambassador underscored that the U.S. supported the need for the Secretariat to be able to collect the annual dues (14,500 USD per country) in a timely manner. Further, the United States had ideas for a constitutional amendment that would not deny training opportunities and would present them in the working group. The Colombo Plan President asked the Secretary General to develop the terms of reference for the working group and asked the group to present proposals for an alternative amendment by the next Council meeting, scheduled for November 17, 2004.

[1](#)5. (C) COROLLARY: In May 2004, Cambodia informed the Colombo Plan that it was withdrawing its membership from the organization. The Secretary General asked the newly created working group to also present ideas on how to address the issue that, at present, Cambodia owes the Colombo Plan \$276,632 in arrears for non-payment from 1977 to present.

[1](#)6. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Mission requests that the Department develop alternative amendments that impose penalties on member countries in arrears without restricting access to training opportunities. Mission notes that a Department-proposed amendment (Ref A) which penalizes member states by removing their right to vote may not have any impact since there are no voting procedures under the Colombo Plan constitution which, as noted above, requires members to seek agreement by consensus. Hence, there is no right to be removed. Instead, we suggest two possible penalty options: that a country not be allowed to block consensus or that a country be restricted to observer status without a voice in Council meetings. Given the U.S. stand on consensus, we believe that these two options may have greater potential in gaining support over an amendment that exclusively addresses votes. END ACTION REQUEST.

[1](#)7. (U) Minimize Considered.

LUNSTEAD